

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO USDOC WASHDC

SECSTATE WASHDC 3671

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 0027

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SF

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT - PORT ELIZABETH ORE-LOADING COMPLEX

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY AND CONGEN

REF: A) JOHANNESBURG 007; B) STATE 284077

1. ARNOLD WILHELMI, WHO IS ASSOCIATED WITH CONSOLIDATED AFRICAN MINES (C.A.M.), HAS CONFIRMED THE CONTINUING INTEREST OF THIS FIRM IN PURSUING THE PORT ELIZABETH IRON-ORE LOADING PROJECT ON WHICH SOROS ASSOCIATES MADE A FEASIBILITY STUDY. WILHELMI STATES THE FIRM HAS RECEIVED PROPOSALS FOR THE PROJECT FROM TWO FRENCH FIRMS AND AN ITALIAN GROUP AND THAT IT EXPECTS TO RECEIVE A PROPOSAL FROM A U.S. - U.K. GROUP (SEAVAR ASSOCIATES) WITH WHICH IT IS IN CONTACT. HE ADDS THAT C.A.M. WOULD WELCOME SERIOUS PROPOSALS FROM OTHER AMERICAN CONSTRUCTORS.

2. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE, ONE STATE ENTERPRISE (ISCOR) AND TWO PRIVATE COMPANIES (C.A.M. AND ASSOCIATED MANGANESE) ARE INTERESTED IN EXPLOITING IRON ORE DEPOSITS IN THE SISHEN AREA OF CAPE PROVINCE. THE SALDANHA BAY PROJECT (AND THE RELATED SISHEN-SALDANHA RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT - SEE JOHANNESBURG 1368, DEC. 19, AND PREVIOUS) IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE AN OUTLET FOR ISCOR'S SISHEN ORE, BUT THAT PROJECT IS MOVING SLOWLY, AND ISCOR
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ITSELF WOULD REPORTEDLY LIKE TO SEE AN ALTERNATE PORT OF EGRESS

DEVELOPED. NO RPT NO SAG ENTERPRISE, HOWEVER, CAN NOW INCLUDE ANOTHER US\$100 MILLION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN ITS BUDGET. THEREFORE C.A.M. SEEKS PRIVATE FINANCING FOR THIS PROJECT, WITH AS MUCH FOREIGN CONTENT AS POSSIBLE, AND BELIEVES IT CAN PROVIDE SATISFACTORY GUARANTEES FOR THE FOREIGN FINANCING THAT MAY BE OFFERED.

3. WILHELMISAYS C.A.M. IS NOT YET COMMITTED TO ANY GROUP ON THIS PROJECT AND WILL BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS IT WITH MAJOR AMERICAN CONSTRUCTORS, OR FOR THEM TO CONTACT SOROS ASSOCIATES IN NEW YORK. GUTHRIE

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